



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Municipal Police Training Academy

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Colonel James M. Manni
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police
Director, Department of Public Safety

Lieutenant Christopher J. Zarrella
Executive Director
Municipal Police Training Academy

Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training

Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2020 via Zoom

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chief Mello called to order the regular meeting of the Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training (POST) at 10:03 a.m. on **November 19, 2020**.

Chief Mello took a roll call. The following POST members were present at the zoom meeting: Chief Mello, Colonel Michael Winquist, Colonel Hugh Clements and Mr. Shawn Brown. Absent is Maria Deaton. Also present were Lieutenant Christopher Zarrella, David Ricciarelli, Donna Lavallee; Chief Syd Wordell, Ryan Holt; Adam Sholes.

2. Discussion/Approval of minutes:

Chief Mello asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the POST Meetings of August 20, 2020, October 7 and November 9, 2020. Mr. Brown made a motion to accept the minutes ; Colonel Winquist seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

3. Military Police Certification

Chief Mello stated that this discussion started at the August POST meeting and asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Brown asked if this would apply only to the Rhode Island National Guard. Chief Mello replied that this a start-a pathway for someone who isn't employed. This is a starting point and later could entertain more entities. They would be issued a certificate and could then walk in to a department with an Academy certification. He asked Adam and Ryan if they were able to look into the statute. Ryan stated that he feels Chief Mello's assessment is right on par. Adam responded that he looked into RIGL and as long as the POST recognizes them as police, they would have the authority to certify. However, he looks at it not as a waiver but a full time recruit sponsored by the Rhode Island National Guard. Two background checks will be required, one from the RISP and one from the National Guard. Chief Mello asked Lt. Zarrella if having them come through as a traditional full time recruit was his understanding and the Lieutenant replied yes, they would attend the entire Academy. Mr. Brown asked if they would have a sponsoring agency and who would Lieutenant Zarrella go back to if there is a problem. Chief Mello replied that the sponsoring agency is the National Guard. If this passes, the National Guard would be recognized as an agency. Colonel Clements voiced his concern that in practical terms, there may not be seats available and going forward this may be an issue. He asked if they would be the last to get seats in a class? Chief Mello agreed that they would, after accommodating municipalities. Lieutenant Zarrella also agreed, stating that all municipalities would have first seating. Chief Mello asked how would this be

reflective in the Academy? A policy change? Adam answered stating a vote recognizing the National Guard as police authority would be needed. Then an MOU with the RISP for background checks.

Colonel Clements made a motion to formally recognize the Rhode Island National Guard as a law enforcement entity with the State of Rhode Island; therefore, they have the ability to submit recruits to the Academy. Colonel Winquist seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

4. Status of unemployed police officers

Chief Mello stated that the POST has the authority to place unemployed police officers in inactive status for any reason. Their certification automatically goes into inactive status and they would have to make an application to the POST to re-activate certification. He stated we would have to use an abundance of caution to place an officer in in-active status. The new hiring agency would petition the POST to re-activate. He would assume the hiring agency would contact the former agency to see why the officer was de-activated. He asked Ryan and Adam if the POST has the authority for anyone who is no longer employed to place them in in-active status? Ryan answered stating it is a grey area but based on his research and because the POST currently has policies in place (3-year rule), he would err on the side that you would have that authority but the statute isn't entirely clear. A reasonable argument could be made that you have the authority. Adam added that he feels you could change the existing policy and vote on a revised policy. Chief Mello asked what the effective date would be. He asked Lieutenant Zarrella if he and Ryan could work on an amendment to the policy adding some language about in-active status. Lieutenant Zarrella stated he and Adam and Ryan would write it up. Ryan suggested a vote at the February meeting. Chief Mello asked to try to get the policy written ASAP and he would call a "Special" meeting. He said he would be happy to help. Chief Wordell added that maybe add something to include the ability to hold some type of hearing? Chief Mello suggested using the same process as we do now for the 3-year rule. Colonel Winquist added that if an agency is going to entertain the path to rid someone of employment, they have to be cautious knowing this. But this is the whole point and he would think that the hiring agency would do their diligence in their background check. Chief Mello stated he will wait to hear from Ryan and the Lieutenant to get the policy re-written.

5. Use of Force Policy Certification Requirement

Chief Mello stated that DOJ requires two thresholds for the UOF policy-the POST and in-state accreditation. At the last RIPCA meeting, there was a discussion with Christine Crocker and Chief St. Sauveur and they already have the pipeline built regarding this so that the State Accreditation is the body that is going to be the certifying entity on this. Chief Mello stated he is OK with that and doesn't feel this agency should intercede. He is satisfied with the Accreditation Commission of Rhode Island to provide that service. Colonel Clements agreed it played well at the RIPCA meeting and no further action is needed.

6. Procedures for destroying firearms confiscated or surrendered in connection to Domestic Violence situations

Chief Mello stated that RIGL requires the POST to develop a policy regarding this. He asked Lieutenant Zarrella to develop a policy regarding this.

At this time, 10:30am, Colonel Clements is leaving the meeting for another commitment

7. Instruction applications

Lieutenant Zarrella asked for approval of two new instructor certifications as follows:

- Detective Mario Cerullo, West Warwick PD – Drug Recognition
- Trooper Marcin Ferenc – RISP – Auto Theft

Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve both instructors; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. All in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

8. Request for Approval of Firearms Qualification Courses

- Bristol PD (tabled from August 19)
- Brown University PD
- East Providence PD
- Johnston PD
- Little Compton PD
- Newport PD
- New Shoreham PD
- North Providence PD
- West Warwick PD

Lt. Zarrella stated that all meet the state requirements and he is recommending approval of their courses. East Providence has to provide additional documentation to Captain Gould and therefore, he is recommending tabling that department until the next POST meeting.

Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve all firearms courses with the exception of East Providence; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion passes.

Colonel Winquist made a motion to table East providence Firearms course until the February POST meeting; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

9. Update and Discussion on Class 2020-II

Lt. Zarrella stated that as of now, the recruits who originally tested positive are now negative and he is waiting on four recruits' testing to come back. We may be able to resume the class on Monday and graduate the 2nd week of December. The 2nd week of December is slated for the Re-test week and any missed classes. The Role Play exercises are being re-vamped and will only be four days in two locations. Everything will be covered.

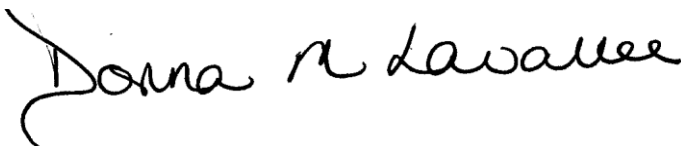
Chief Mello asked about the next class and offered to help with the seat requests.

He stated he looks forward to a special meeting soon.

10. Adjournment

Colonel Winquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 am; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna M. Lavalley
Administrative Assistant

